

HOMELAND DEFENSE TRAINING EXERCISES

AREA OF INTEREST: CURRENT OPERATIONS

FY06 UFR: \$16.2M

APPN: OMNG and ANG O&M

DESCRIPTION: The ability of National Guard (NG) forces to respond to a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) attack is directly dependent on its training. USNORTHCOM conducts several major Homeland Security/Homeland Defense (HLS/HLD) exercises each year, and these exercises continue to grow in scope and quality. In the event the NG is tasked to provide crisis management and/or consequence management support for a catastrophic event, there are critical training voids that must be addressed. The National Guard is well equipped to provide support to expeditionary missions and to relief operations (hurricanes, floods, etc), but requires additional training to respond to a Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear High-Yield Explosive event (CBRNE).

ISSUE JUSTIFICATION: Training and exercises for NG specific responsibilities must be in preparation for a catastrophic event. Entire metropolitan areas may require consequence management, and casualties could number in the tens of thousands. To prepare for an event on this scale, NG personnel must exercise mass casualty scenarios that deliver an accurate portrayal of the problems of handling tens of thousands of people. The states must be trained and exercised on the following: mass population control measures, triage of thousands of casualties, movement of thousands of injured personnel, inoculation assistance and crowd control for several hundred thousand people, and mortuary services for several thousand dead. It is imperative to get our roads and byways open after a catastrophe. Building blow-down and mass population movement would likely be beyond the control of any police forces and the NG could be tasked to open the lines of communication and commerce. These requirements must be identified and practiced if there is to be an effective response. Additional training is required for troops and leaders in an anti-terrorist environment with respect to guarding critical facilities and providing security at critical events. Terrorists have established patterns of casing targets and preparing for their operations. It is important that NG forces are trained to identify these patterns while conducting guard at a fixed or mobile post. A reporting system must be taught and exercised that enables critical information like this to move forward within the chain of command. In addition to funding state level exercises the National Guard Bureau must fund a state's participation in NORTHCOM's national Homeland Security exercises. This is required to develop the working relationship two like, but separate, military organizations need in order for both to support a state's requirements through two separate chains of command. The National Guard must participate in realistic training exercises on a regular basis to develop and maintain response proficiency. These exercises have proven necessary to validate processes, tactics techniques and procedures (TTP), communication systems, networks, and equipment in realistic scenarios. NORTHCOM uses these exercises to validate plans, standard operating procedures, and organizational structure. Currently, no money is programmed to pay for this National Guard participation.

FUNDING IMPACT: Large-scale collective training will not be conducted if the required resources are not obtained and the ability for the NG to respond to a WMD incident and provide HLS/HLD for the nation is greatly diminished. Many processes and procedures, as well as communication and other equipment, will be untested until needed. Therefore, NORTHCOM will have a very limited capability to execute a successful regional/national response in the event of a CBRNE/terrorist attack.